



Significant threats to our national security loom on the horizon, including the nuclear menace from North Korea and the threats posed by global terrorism. But one particular threat is of our own making.

Our government has failed to reach an agreement on managing the national debt, and as a result America's military faces more than \$500 billion in new defense spending reductions over the next 10 years. The Pentagon faces the first round of cuts next month: "sequestration," an across-the-board cut of \$43 billion.

These cuts were written into law as part of the Budget Control Act of 2011, and are on top of \$487 billion in cuts already being implemented. They are an approach to reducing the national budget that was designed to force responsible action, not to be implemented as policy. I believe we must reduce waste and inappropriate spending in the Pentagon's budget, but we can do better than the dangerous sequestration.

My first priority is to ensure we do not look for savings from the pockets of military personnel, their families, and retirees. We must keep the faith with those who have sacrificed for our nation. Congress already made changes to benefits last year, and I don't believe we need to go any further.

My second priority is to avoid cuts that harm our strategic posture. We are transitioning from a long period of counterinsurgency in Iraq and Afghanistan toward an uncertain future; I don't want to commit our armed forces to a stance that in five or 10 years might not match global realities. Looking at defense budgets and consulting with like-minded experts, I believe we can save hundreds of billions of dollars without harming our national security or our servicemen and women and their dependents.

The problem with sequester is that the same weight is given to vital programs as to ones that are unnecessary. My alternative plan cancels the haphazard cuts scheduled to begin next month and reduces spending in a smarter and safer way by more than \$500 billion during the next decade:

1. \$150 billion. Require annual reductions in defense spending by the Department of Defense through reducing programs and activities which do not contribute significantly to military capability, allowing leaders of Defense to use their expertise to combat wasteful earmarks and respond to changing environments.
2. \$100 billion. Adopt "sea swap" policies for cruisers, destroyers, and amphibious ships by flying crews out to ships instead of changing crews at home ports.
3. \$53 billion. Use local civilian contractors instead of military personnel to perform commercial-type activities at military bases.
4. \$52.5 billion. Shift Army and Marine Corps troops to Reserves, preserving ground combat strength but returning active duty forces to pre-9/11 levels.
5. \$52 billion. Reduce spending for the Pentagon's "Other Procurement," which covers non-major equipment replacement. Our overseas deployments are ramping down, and everyday equipment will last longer now than in wartime.
6. \$36.7 billion. Cut the number of Department of Defense civilian bureaucrat positions through attrition.
7. \$20 billion. Cut U.S. troops stationed in Europe.
8. \$15 billion. Cut the number of consultants and contractors at headquarters.
9. \$9 billion. Cap experimental fuel procurement.

10. \$7.1 billion. Consolidate the management of retail stores on military bases.
11. \$7 billion. Postpone procurement of the Army's Ground Combat Vehicle.
12. \$4.6 billion. Unify the military medical system.
13. \$3 billion. Delay refurbishment of the Abrams tank.
14. \$1.8 billion. Spend less on military bands.
15. \$800 million. Reduce the top-heavy number of Pentagon generals and admirals.

All that would make for \$512.5 billion saved over 10 years.

Accepting \$1 trillion in cuts over the next decade means we must be wise about how America employs our Armed Forces. While these targeted proposals are not painless, they provide a reasonable road map for avoiding the national security and fiscal disaster that would follow from not responsibly reducing our debt.

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